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SPECIAL ISSUE

The Managerial Revolution: A Reformulation

by Samuel Francis

Introduction

by Clyde Wilson

"A Day With Sam Francis"
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It is a great pleasure and honor for a mere Carolinian to be here on the hallowed soil of the Old Dominion to take part in the wonderful tradition of Willie Pie's Store—this celebration of the best intellectual and moral heritage of the South. I have often said that if we had one impresario like David Bovenizer in every state in the South, we could take back our country from the interlopers who now control it. If we had one David Bovenizer in every county in the South, we could take over the world—though of course we would not want to do anything so silly.

If our country is to be saved, the initiative will have to come from the South. John C. Calhoun said: "You know that it is an axiom with me, that every revolution in favor of liberty in our system, must be effected by the South, and, I may add, the South headed by Virginia." He repeated the same idea many times. I propose it as a motto for our gathering today.

So it is fitting that our conversation celebrates a strong, clear Southern voice in the cause of republican liberty: Dr. Samuel T. Francis, the distinguished syndicated columnist for the *Washington Times* and contributing editor of *Chronicles*. Dr. Francis has raised American public discourse to a new high of intelligence and realism and historical scope in a time when the discussion of public affairs has never been more trivialized and lacking in integrity. For which point I call to witness the juvenilia of the present presidential campaign.

Sam Francis is a Tennessean. He was graduated from Johns Hopkins and holds a doctorate in history from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I was fortunate to know Sam in our graduate school days when he was the spearhead of a conservative discussion group which was the intellectual and ethical highpoint of my education, as it was for others.

> **"Every revolution in favor of liberty in our system, must be effected by the South."**

I had published a few small pieces in *Modern Age* and *National Review*, and I remember well Sam calling me up and flattering me into attending the meetings by telling me I was "the best known conservative writer on campus." I had a fulltime graduate load, a fulltime job, and a family, and was not inclined to take on any more activities, but I attended, and kept on as long as I was at Chapel Hill. The Chapel Hill Conservative Club was the germinating point for a proliferating circle of friendships and careers. You would recognize immediately many of the names. The circle is strongly reflected in the books *Why The South Will Survive* and *The New Right Papers* and in the present board of editors of *Chronicles* magazine.

On leaving UNC Sam worked for the Heritage Foundation as a foreign policy analyst and as national security advisor for our lamented friend Senator John P. East. He then joined the editorial page of the *Washington Times*, in its early days. As deputy editorial page editor he won twice in succession the prestigious writing award of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, an unprecedented achievement. He is now a syndicated columnist for the *Times*

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and also widely known for his monthly columns in *Chronicles*, a brilliant collection of which will soon appear in a book. Those who have survived the famous Lost Weekends of *Chronicles* editors in Rockford know also that Sam is a man of infinite jest and a great raconteur. He is the author, as well, of *Power and History: The Political Thought of James Burnham*, and a contributor to other books.

Dr. Francis's stature has been increasingly recognized of late. He was selected by Patrick J. Buchanan to take over his column when Mr. Buchanan was diverted by other activities recently. Just last month Sam was described by the *New Republic*, in an analysis of contemporary conservatism, as the "guru" of the Paleoconservatives. I am delighted to think that I know a guru, as I have never known a real one before.

Without presuming to provide a definitive list of the elements that make up a true conservatism, we can state with certainty one essential—a realistic conception of the limitations of human nature and human potential in this fallen world—a sense of limitations based upon history, upon practical experience, and upon Revelation.

Amidst the fatuous petty utopianism that pervades American public discourse, Sam Francis's strong clear voice of realism rings above the babble. The peculiar failings of the predominant American mind since the war (and I do not need to tell this group which war I refer to) are these—superficiality and sentimentality. Dr. Francis's writings have shown a rare immunity from these failings. To avoid superficiality we need to look at what is, not at what is said to be. To avoid sentimentality we must take men as they are. That is what our Founding Fathers did.

That is what Dr. Francis does in his commentary. Trenchantly and often humorously he conveys the deeper structure of the world and the larger meaning of the passing hubbub of the day's events. (As to the humor, my favorite is the image of Old Dutch being strapped to his pony to be sent home to California at the end of his reign, to the consternation of the swarm of patronage artists who had fattened off his regime.) No one does this better. This immensely gifted commentator has a range that covers history, economics, political power, sociology, and culture with equal ease. He has raised public commentary in the syndicated column to heights of seriousness and intelligence not reached in a long time. I was about to say since Walter Lippmann. But Walter Lippman was not really as good as he is supposed to have been, and Sam is much better.

One of the most pleasing things about Sam's career is the way in which he has continued to grow in depth and scope. Unlike the babble of commentators that clutter the press and the airwaves, he keeps getting better. It is one of the characteristics of American commercial communications that when someone succeeds, the overwhelming temptation is for them to keep on repeating over and over the same thing. Commentators become celebrities for repeating and caricaturing themselves. I offer in evidence the tragic denouement of William F. Buckley's career. Unlike these others, Sam keeps learning.

There is somewhere the silly idea grown up—stemming from willful misinterpretations of the Declaration of Independence spread by New Englanders and solidified by Lincoln's disingenuous cant about government of, by, and for the people—that tough realism is undemocratic, that we have to be naively stupid and optimistic to be supporters of a government of the people.

This was not true, emphatically, of our Founding Fathers. It was not true of the great thinkers from whom Sam Francis has drawn his lessons about the realities of power and elites in human society. His great teachers Machiavelli, Pareto, and James Burnham, were realists in defense of the liberty of the West. Let us not forget, despite Machiavelli's bad reputation, that he was a republican—his interest was not in promoting cynicism and ruthlessness for its own sake, but in preserving the safety of self-governing commonwealths by making their leaders tough and effective. Machiavelli was a republican who knew that republics could not survive in a hostile world by sentimentality and shallowness.

Likewise James Burnham, whose analysis of the managerial state Dr. Francis has applied, extended, and deepened. Burnham's experiences within the belly of the Communist beast taught him to study the nature and function of power without sentiment. Burnham's very

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allegiance to Western liberty, once he had won to it, forced him to look realistically at its weaknesses and kept him from too soft and easy a faith in the effortless triumph of democracy.

After World War II sentimental Liberalism was triumphant in the public discourse, from which no deviation went unpunished. Burnham alone was asking what the Liberal worldview and its characteristic purveyors portended for the West—truly, in a long range and functional sense. His answer was in his 1964 book *The Suicide of the West: The Meaning and Destiny of Liberalism*. Nothing has happened since, not even the fall of the Soviet Union, to change Burnham's sad predictions about the self-immolation of the West. If anything, the new challenges to the weaknesses of Liberalism are more deadly than communism because much more diffuse and less easily grasped and responded to.

Like Burnham, Francis knows that self-government and the free market and tradition are great things, but they do not in themselves spare us from the perils of a contingent world and the hardness of historical choice. Today Francis alone among the complacent conservatives and liberals calls us to these truths. When we look back and compare Burnham's thought with that of what passed for the wise men of his day, we can easily see who stood above the herd. The same will be true in the future. When the Safires and Buckleys and Tyrrells and Krauthammers and Wickers and all the other pretentious pundits are long forgotten, perceptive historians will be able to get a true reading of our own times from Dr. Francis.

Now in a time when third-raters occupy the seats of power and the forums of intellectual prestige and prattle on about New World Orders and The End of History, even as the social fabric of the West unravels before our very eyes, we need badly a voice of truth and realism. Republican self-government can only survive if it can produce from time to time men who are willing to tell what is true rather than what is comforting and flattering. We are fortunate to have such a man in Sam Francis. ■

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The Managerial Revolution: A Reformulation

by Samuel Francis

James Burnham is today best known, if he is known at all, as the senior editor of *National Review* and as the principal conservative spokesman on the American right for an anti-communist foreign policy. It was in this role that his column in *National Review* appeared for 23 years from the magazine's founding until the stroke that forced his retirement in 1978, and those of you who read *National Review* in that period will remember it, as well as several of the books he wrote in those years. But long before Burnham joined *National Review* he had become well-known for earlier writings. The best known of these was his first book, *The Managerial Revolution: What Is Happening in the World*, published in 1941, which he wrote in the aftermath of a six-year association with Marxism. From 1934 to 1940, Burnham was an important member and leader of the Trotskyist movement in the United States, indeed one of Leon Trotsky's top advisers, and the way in which he originally formulated his theory of the managerial revolution was heavily influenced by the Marxist view of history and economics.

It must be emphasized that what Burnham saw in the world-historical process he called "the managerial revolution" was a transition at least as significant in history as the industrial revolution or what Marx had predicted would occur in the revolution against capitalism. The managerial revolution is not simply a national or political revolution of one set of governors against another. It encompasses political revolutions such

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as those that occurred in Russia, Germany, and the United States, but it also involves an economic and a cultural revolution and amounts ultimately to the displacement of one, old civilization by another, new civilization. If some of Burnham's original formulations of the theory are flawed by the influence of Marxism and other misconceptions, the theory can be reformulated to correct these errors and it can still, perhaps even more than in the 1940s, explain what is happening in the world.

What drives the managerial revolution is the emergence of a new managerial elite and its conflict with the old elite of capitalist or bourgeois society. To Burnham, as he argued at length in his second book, *The Machiavellians*, all human societies are ruled by elites or minorities of the population, in part because of the irreducible fact of human inequality and in part because most human beings are sufficiently docile and uninterested in ruling that a minority always emerges that acquires power. Not only do elites inevitably rule, however, but also it is the elite that actually creates the society it rules. "From the point of view of the theory of the ruling class," Burnham wrote,

> a society is the society of its ruling class. A nation's strength or weakness, its culture, its powers of endurance, its prosperity, its decadence, depend in the first instance upon the nature of its ruling class. More particularly, the way in which to study a nation, to understand it, to predict what will happen to it, requires first of all and primarily an analysis of the ruling class. Political history and political science are thus predominantly the history and science of ruling classes, their origin, development, composition, structure, and changes.

The managerial revolution takes place because of changes in the structure of the elites.

The managerial revolution thus takes place because of changes in the structure of the elites of Western civilization, and not only the political elites but also the economic and cultural elites.

The revolution and the managerial elite that leads it are products ultimately of the vast enlargement of population in the industrial revolution of the late 18th century and of various technological and organizational changes that developed in the aftermath. As the scale of human numbers increased in Western Europe and the United States, human organizations of all kinds came under intolerable strains. These strains are obvious enough in the cities of the late 19th century, with their overcrowding, sanitation problems, crime, poverty, and social dislocations, and these and similar consequences of the population increase affected the scale of other organizations in the state, the economy, and the culture. Not only did the increase in population and its concentration in large cities create strains, however, but also they created opportunities for those who understood how to organize, discipline, and provide for the masses.

Thus, new kinds of organizations and new kinds of social technologies were invented for those purposes. In the economy, systems of mass production and mass consumption developed that were possible only because of the new scale of population as workers and consumers. In the state, governments undertook new functions and expanded old functions that also were the result of the new scale of human numbers, the new scale of human interactions that resulted from them, and the new taxes and resources that were available from them. In the culture, mass media emerged that were also dependent on the mass markets of readers, listeners, and viewers, and educational institutions also began to be affected by the enlarged population and the demands that social mobility placed on them. The historian Geoffrey Barraclough points to this organizational enlargement as it affected the British economy of the late 19th century:

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> The new industrial techniques, unlike the old, necessitated the creation of large-scale undertakings and the concentration of the population in vast urban agglomerations. In the steel industry, for example, the introduction of the blast furnace meant that the small individual enterprise employing ten or a dozen workmen quickly became an anachronism.... The small-scale family businesses, which were typical of the first phase of industrialism, were in many cases too narrowly based...; nor had they always the means to finance the installation of new, more complicated and more expensive machinery.... [T]he process of concentration, once begun, was irreversible.

In short, the enlargement of human populations led to or was a major cause of the enlargement in the scale of human organizations in the forms of cities, expanded governments, enlarged corporations, factories, and eventually labor unions, mass media, and mass education. The organizational enlargement itself constituted a new social technology, and in order for mass organizations to work efficiently, other such technologies were also necessary. Bureaucracy itself was one such social technology, as were such new disciplines or professions as Henry Ford's mass production system, Frederick W. Taylor's "scientific management" for factories, public relations, city management, and a number of others.

The enlargement of economic, political, and cultural organizations and the appearance of entirely new kinds of organizations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries tended to generate new kinds of elites to operate and control them. The old elites of the bourgeois order lacked the technical skills to design and operate the new organizations, and the common feature of the new elites that began to appear was that they all possessed the technical competence necessary to master the new social technologies and the new mass organizations. The technical skills that the new elites possessed were in part based on their training in the physical sciences, but even more on their training in the administrative and managerial techniques on which large organizations in the state, economy, and culture came to depend. This technical skill itself tended to set the new elites apart from the old. The latter, if they were aristocratic in nature, depended on inheritance for their claims to leadership, or if they were bourgeois, depended on entrepreneurial skills in operating the comparatively small-scale and compact units and organizations of 19th century bourgeois capitalism and the minimal state of that era. From the outset, then, there was a differentiation in mentality and background between the old elites and the new.

But the differentiation between them also extended to an emerging conflict of interests between the old bourgeois and aristocratic elites on the one hand and the new managerial elites on the other. It was in the interest of the new managerial elites to continue the enlargement and technical complication of the organizations in which they worked. The larger and more complex these organizations in the economy, state, and culture became, the more necessary were the new elites to running them; and the more necessary they were to running the new mass organizations, the more power and rewards the new elites could claim and the less necessary were the old elites who lacked the skills to run them.

The conflict of interests between the old elites and the new took various forms in the early 20th century. In the corporations, which were the main form of the new mass organizations in the economy, there was a "separation of ownership and control," by which the owners of corporate stock were often displaced from effective control of the corporations by those professional managers who understood the technical processes of production and marketing. While the stockowners retained the legal rights of ownership, those rights did not confer the technical skills necessary to manage the corporation, and the managers who did command those skills were frequently able to direct the corporation along lines that the stockowners resisted or were uninterested in or ignorant of. Similarly in the state, the enlargement of state functions in response to the new scale of human numbers and congestion led to the emergence of a

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managerial bureaucracy that engaged in regulating the economy and managing social relations through education, public health, and social policy, and the interests of this bureaucracy were often at odds with the interests of those who were analogous to the legal owners of stock, that is, those who were legally or formally entitled to the control of the state, either the aristocratic elites that inherited political functions, the officeholders and political representatives of the bourgeois elite, or the mass of voters themselves.

In the course of the early 20th century, then, the two social groups of managers and their allies and the old elites of the bourgeois order developed a conflict of interests that was based on their differing structures and composition. We can see the beginnings of this conflict, at least in its political dimensions, in the Progressive Era, when the advocates of a larger and more centralized state involved in economic and social management began to work for goals that were closely bound to the interests of the new elite. Two socialist historians, Gabriel Kolko and James Weinstein, among others, have shown how large corporations and their executives encouraged federal regulation of the economy and labor legislation that would harm their smaller competitors, and many of the managers and executives of the larger corporations were supportive of the enlargement of the state and its centralization, as opposed to the leaders of smaller businesses who sought to restrain state power. This trend represents what Burnham called "the fusion of state and economy," by which the managerial elites of the corporations join with the bureaucratic elite of the state to carry out what in effect is a nationalization of the economy, even though private property still exists in law. Precisely because the managerial elites of the corporation do not legally own the corporate property they manage, they have far less interest in protecting private property rights than the old bourgeois elite, which owned and depended on private property for its wealth, political power, and social position. Hence, the corporate managers are less opposed to and often are even in favor of state regulation of and intervention in the economy, and in this effort they made common cause with Progressive intellectuals, labor leaders, social reformers, and bureaucratic regulators.

Corporate managers are in favor of state regulation and intervention in the economy.

But the conflict between the managerial elite and the bourgeois elite goes much further. As noted, it is in the interest of the managerial elite to encourage organizational enlargement and dependence on technical complexity, and sooner or later the new elite finds that not only the bourgeois elite itself is resistant to these interests but also so is the whole fabric of bourgeois society. Bourgeois society as it developed in the 19th century was a small-scale, localized, and personalized structure. The scale of the state was small, and the state was supposed to be tightly restricted by constitutionalist formulas that limited what it could do and how it could do it. Since the social dominance of the bourgeois elite was based on its ownership of property and its control of localized and often informal power bases, it did not want a large and active state and indeed generally found a large, activist state a threat to its interests and needs. Bourgeois culture revolved around a code of what Max Weber called "ascetic individualism," according to which it is the individual who is the only meaningful moral, economic, and political actor and as such is endowed with moral dignity and economic and political rights, but at the same time is bound by various moral, economic, and political duties that are supposed to govern the uses to which he puts his rights. Bourgeois culture depended on social rather than political or legal disciplines and relied on the strictures of the private conscience as formed by social institutions such as the family,

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the local community, and religious groups rather than the formal controls of legal and administrative authority.

The problem with bourgeois culture and the whole fabric of the bourgeois order from the point of view of the new managerial elite was that it was an obstacle and impediment to its interests. The very localized structure of bourgeois society restricted the kind of centralization and mass marketing that mass organizations in the economy needed. Local variations in taste and custom restricted the degree to which the homogeneous goods turned out by the mass production system could be sold. Local jurisdictional rights, states rights, private property, social classes, ethnic and racial differentiations, and cultural regionalism limited the reach of the centralized state under managerial control and also often impeded the development of mass production and marketing systems. The limitations that bourgeois society presented to managerial power and interests therefore meant that the managerial elite would be in conflict with the very structure of bourgeois society and culture.

Burnham discussed at least some aspects of this cultural conflict in *The Managerial Revolution*, but he did not go far enough. He recognized that the new managerial elite, like any elite, needs an ideology or political formula by which it rationalizes or justifies its power, and he saw the political formula of the American managerial class in the "New Dealism" of the Roosevelt era and in what would soon be called "liberalism." Whereas the old bourgeois elite had adopted a political formula of "classical liberalism," based on the ascetic individualism of Weber or what would soon be called "conservatism" that emphasized individualism, the limits of the state, constitutionalism, and a free market economy, the new liberalism of the managerial class emphasized collectivism, the need and legitimacy of expanding and centralizing state power and functions, the need to replace constitutionalism and legalism with administrative efficiency and a "sociological jurisprudence" that interpreted the law in terms of sociological theory, research, and social problems, and reliance on economic planning and regulations to control private property in the name of social needs. Burnham understood that the new political formula of the managerial class reflected and expressed its interests as an elite, just as the formula of classical liberalism reflected and expressed the interests of the old bourgeois elite, and indeed one of the most interesting implications of the theory of the managerial revolution to the understanding of 20th century American political history is its view of the conflict between conservatism and liberalism as essentially a class conflict between bourgeois and managerial social forces. Yet, while this understanding of political ideology as the formula of ruling or competing elites is useful, it is not the only meaning of the cultural and ideological conflict between the managerial and bourgeois groups.

A larger meaning consists in the deliberate cultural destruction of the bourgeois order by the managerial elite and the effort of the new elite to construct a new culture centered on its own interests. As I have noted, the central interest of the managerial elite in the mass organizations of state and economy is to encourage the continuing enlargement and technical complexity of the organizations it controls. It cannot do that as long as the smaller, localized, and more compact and personalized institutions and values of the bourgeois elite prevail, and not only is it in the interest of the managerial elites to weaken or subvert these constraints but also it needs to construct a new culture in which organizational enlargement will be facilitated and rewarded. One of the main problems that the new managerial elites faced was how to break the mass population of its bourgeois habits and disciplines of ascetic individualism, localism, social particularism, and independence and re-train them to accept the managerial disciplines of mass organizations, which involved an ethic of mass consumption and immediate gratification, political and economic centralization, and collective and administrative disciplines rather than social, personal, and spontaneous ones.

Burnham in his early writings emphasized the authoritarian nature of the emerging managerial regimes, and he believed that Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union were the basic models of managerialism as it would develop in the United States and elsewhere. In *The*

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Machiavellians in particular he made use of the social psychological theory developed by the Italian sociologist Vilfredo Pareto, one of the major elite theorists whose ideas he discussed in the book.

Drawing on a distinction formulated by Machiavelli, Pareto, distinguished between two different kinds of ruling classes or elites that are analogous to Machiavelli's "lions" and "foxes." While Machiavelli had emphasized the reliance on force by rulers who are psychically lions and reliance on cunning by those that are psychically foxes, Pareto had elaborated an entire personality type around these two metaphors. Human beings who were psychologically "foxes," or in whom what Pareto called "Class I residues" prevailed, tended to rely on manipulation to solve problems, and in Burnham's description, foxes

> live by their wits; they put their reliance on fraud, deceit, and shrewdness. They do not have strong attachments to family, church, nation, and traditions. . . . They live in the present, taking little thought of the future, and are always ready for change, novelty, and adventure. They are not adept, as a rule, in the use of force. They are inventive and chance-taking.

Lions, on the other hand, "are able and willing to use force, relying on it rather than brains to solve their problems. They are conservative, patriotic, loyal to tradition, and solidly tied to supra-individual groups like the Church or nation." Elites that contain mainly verbalists, intellectuals, and administrators will be composed mainly of foxes and will try to solve their problems through verbal, administrative, and manipulative behavior rather than through force or appeal to group solidarity. Burnham had originally predicted that the emerging managerial elites would be composed mainly of lions, probably because he was taking the highly coercive regimes of Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia as the paradigms of future managerial systems, though by 1964, in his last book, *Suicide of the West*, he had come to view the managerial types as mainly foxes.

Human beings who are psychologically "foxes" tend to rely on manipulation.

In fact, what occurred in the United States was the development of a managerial regime that is dominated by types corresponding to Pareto's and Machivelli's foxes, a regime that relies mainly upon manipulation rather than force and appeals to social solidarity as a means of discipline. How and why this kind of "soft managerial regime" rather than a "hard managerial regime" based on lions developed in the United States is an interesting but complicated question; nevertheless, it seems clear the need to manage mass society almost necessitated the development of very sophisticated and far-reaching techniques of mass manipulation.

Bourgeois culture, with its reliance on individualism, social institutions and discipline, and local and individual autonomy, was not susceptible to managerial manipulation, and the problem for the soft managerial elite was, very simply, to destroy that culture and construct and impose a new one. I think most of you are familiar with how that has been done politically—through reform measures that have promoted centralization of political power, the destruction of local and states rights, the regulation and management of businesses, communities, race relations, education, health care, child care, social welfare, the environment, law enforcement, and the family itself. Most of these measures, associated with political liberalism, have the effect of removing or undermining the social authorities that govern these activities and bringing them more and more under bureaucratic and legal control, by which they can be manipulated under one kind of administered "therapy" or another by the managerial bureaucratic elites of the state.

But there is a similar and closely related development in

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the economy. The mass economy in which large corporations function depends on continuous mass consumption, and a good deal of central fiscal and monetary policy has historically been aimed at increasing purchasing power and managing aggregate demand to encourage consumption. It is in the interest of managerial capitalism, then, not only to promote a political order in which economic regulation by the state is encouraged to undercut smaller competitors but also to promote a cultural ethic of consumption and material gratification. This ethic, which we can call an ethic of hedonism and which Wilhelm Ropke and Albert Jay Nock both called "economism," is promoted through mass advertising as well as through economic policy, is destructive of the bourgeois ethic of thrift and deferral of gratification and is closely linked ideologically to the other political formulas of managerial liberalism, for example, to relativism, which denies the objective value of the bourgeois ethic and rationalizes immediate gratification, and to a universalist or cosmopolitan ethic that seeks to delegitimize local, social, national, ethnic, sexual, and individual differentiations under the rationale that we are all components of an abstract humanity. The result of the managerial attack on bourgeois culture is the discrediting of bourgeois ideology and formulas as obsolete and repressive, the subversion of bourgeois localism and social and personal disciplines, and their replacement by a mass society "liberated" from bourgeois codes and institutions but disciplined and homogenized nonetheless by the manipulative techniques and procedures of the mass democratic Megastate and the hedonism of managerial capitalism.

Moreover, the political and economic sectors of the soft managerial elite not only work together toward their goal of destroying bourgeois culture but also create their own cultural vanguard to design and provide justifications for it. This cultural vanguard of the managerial elite, the intellectual and verbalist class, is based primarily in the mass universities and the larger media organizations and it is itself part of the elite, exhibits much the same composition as the corporate and bureaucratic sectors of the elite, and has essentially the same interests. Like the economic and political managers, the managerial intelligentsia works in and depends on and receives its rewards and power from mass organizations in the universities and media. In the universities in the early 20th century there was a protracted struggle between the new professionalized academic disciplines and the local bourgeois groups that traditionally controlled and administered the universities and colleges, and the conflict over academic freedom reflected this struggle between the emerging managerial intellectual class, which controlled the new disciplines, and the old bourgeois elite. In fact it was a struggle for academic power, as most self-described struggles for freedom are, and it was eventually won by the managerial intelligentsia when it was able to gain autonomy for itself, tenured jobs, and professional control of teaching and academic departments. Like the state and economic organizations, universities too expanded in functions and size, and this organizational enlargement, described in a 1966 mono graph by Francis Rourke and Glenn Brookes called *The Managerial Revolution in Higher Education*, was an essential part of the empowerment of the intelligentsia as the cultural vanguard of the managerial elite in the state and economy. Moreover, with federal aid to universities and education, the availability of federal funding through the NEA, NEH, and the National Science Foundation, and Supreme Court expansion of First Amendment rights which struck down local censorship laws and empowered the intellectual class to monopolize public discourse, the managerial intelligentsia, also like its siblings in the economy and state, is closely linked to the centralized state and dependent on it.

Burnham's theory of the managerial revolution thus offers an interpretation of 20th century American and indeed Western history, a model by which we can perceive the larger historical framework in which the victory of what calls itself "liberalism" has occurred, and the theory offers an understanding of the triumph of liberalism in terms of the structural interests of an elite that has come to dominate politically, economically, and culturally. In my view, the theory also offers an answer to an unresolved problem of what

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we might call the conventional conservative view of 20th century history. Under the influence of Richard Weaver's phrase "ideas have consequences," most conservatives of all factions and ideological colorations have tended to see the emergence of modern liberalism as the result of a long process of the working out of certain philosophical premises—in the case of Weaver himself, premises that were articulated in the late Middle Ages, and in the views of others, premises that were formulated in the Enlightenment, the Civil War era, the Progressive Era, or the New Deal. But what this conservative interpretation does not really answer as far as I am aware is the question of why certain ideas had consequences and why they had consequences when they did. Why, for example, did Thomas Aquinas' ideas not have the consequences that William of Ockham's ideas had; why did Burke's ideas not have the influence that Rousseau's had or Calhoun's more influence than Lincoln's? The answer implicit in the theory of the managerial revolution and in the broader theory of elites on which it is based is that certain ideas are more useful to certain social groups than others, and that as those groups aspire to social power and dominance, they adopt and disseminate the ideas they find useful in the forms of ideologies or political formulas and seek to discredit or suppress alternative intellectual systems that serve or might serve as the legitimizing formulas and ideologies of rival social groups.

One of the major implications of the theory of the managerial revolution, then, is that the conflict between conservatives and liberals, right and left, is not merely an ideological or intellectual struggle nor merely a political struggle between different parties, candidates, and factions. It is also a civilizational struggle and a social conflict between two elites and the civilizations that formed around them, the one in a process of historical decline and disintegration and the other, the managerial, in a process of ascendancy and consolidation.

This conservative interpretation does not answer why certain ideas had consequences and why they had consequences when they did.

But a further implication of the theory of the managerial revolution is that if the bourgeois order and the elite that prevailed in it is moribund, then conservatism as it has been developed since the New Deal, the political spearhead of the managerial revolution in the United States, is no longer a useful vehicle for mobilizing resistance to the managerial regime, that conservatism is what a Marxist would call a "false consciousness" that does not reliably reflect the interests and values of a living social class and that it is in fact a kind of fossilized ideology. Indeed, in the last 12 years since the beginning of the Reagan administration we have seen the transformation of bourgeois conservatism into a formula that is essentially a reformulation of managerial liberalism, under the labels of "neo-conservatism," "Big Government conservatism," Jack Kemp's "progressive conservatism," etc. Whereas the distinctive feature of what is sometimes called Old Right conservatism was opposition to the New Deal, the characteristic feature of the reformulated conservatism of the 1980s is acceptance of the New Deal, modified only by a promise to serve as a kind of clean up squad for the excesses of managerial liberalism in its pristine form. Yet, for all the polemics of the Old Right against neo-conservatism in the last few years, it is hard to see what else could have occurred to bourgeois conservatism or the Old Right, given the inescapable fact that the bourgeois elite, the social force whose interests and values it expressed, was virtually defunct.

Yet, if the bourgeois elite and its civilization are dead, the soft managerial system is not necessarily immortal. Pareto, in his theory of what he called the "circulation of elites" or how elites rise and fall, argued that an elite that is too heavily dominated by either lions or foxes becomes inherently unstable and eventually succumbs to an

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excess of its own virtues. An elite in which lions are the prevalent element will rely on force and group solidarity too much and will be unable to respond successfully to social challenges that require more subtlety, cunning, or manipulative skills than lions can normally muster. Sooner or later such a leonine regime meets such challenges and sooner or later is unable to meet them and succumbs to them. We have seen something like this occur in the Soviet Union, where the Communist regime, composed of aging but still combative lions, utterly missed the meaning of the social and political changes that were occurring in Soviet society, tried to control them through a desperate act of coercion, and was crushed by its inability to shift to a more vulpine manipulative style.

Similarly, in the soft managerial regime of the United States, the elite appears incapable of responding to any challenge except through manipulation, and if and when it does resort to force, it does so incompetently, too late, and often with more brutality than was necessary. Whether it is the public relations and carefully designed imagery that substitutes for politics, the rehabilitative therapy that serves to meet crime and to fight the largely phony "drug war," or the enterprise zones and refurbished Great Society conjuring tricks that are being revived to respond to the Los Angeles riots, manipulation in one form or another appears to be the only response that occurs to the incumbent elite. Yet it is increasingly clear that the challenges that are emerging and indeed are already present in American society are ones that demand more leonine responses than the elite is capable of imagining, let alone delivering. By leonine responses I do not mean only the use of force, though the use of force and plenty of it is clearly what is called for in meeting violent crime, but also the appeals to group solidarity that Pareto's lions typically make. The result of managerial manipulation has been to disperse and disintegrate not only the bourgeois order but also any social order that cannot be squeezed into the bureaucratic, homogenizing, and artificial molds the elite has designed, and only a leonine affirmation of national and cultural solidarity can restore order where the managerial regime has spawned only incipient chaos.

Yet, if the bourgeois elite is defunct, where will the lions come from who are to undertake this task? One of the aspects of Burnham's thought that I find attractive, both in the theory of the managerial revolution and in the Machiavellian theory of elites, is that it firmly rejects abstractions and formalism and proposing solutions for which there is no social or historical material available. It does no good to say that lions are necessary if all that is available are rats and rabbits.

In fact, despite appearances based on looking for too long at the incumbent managerial elite, that is not all that is available. As the soft managerial system destroyed the bourgeois order, it also generated another social force in the wreckage. Unable through its manipulative and dispersive mechanisms to create authentic social institutions and loyalties, the managerial system has failed to assimilate or homogenize an important segment of American society, a segment that sociologist Donald Warren has called "Middle American Radicals." Typically consisting of blue-collar or lower-middle class workers, usually of European ethnic background, but also including white Southerners and Westerners, Middle American Radicals were the core of the Wallace movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s and more recently are largely identical to the now anachronistic "Reagan Democrats." Professor Warren has identified Middle American Radicals only partly in terms of objective social characteristics, however; a more salient characteristic of them is attitudinal. Typically they believe that the political, economic, and cultural system in the United States exploits them, ignores them, and is hostile to them, and they see themselves as the exploited middle class nucleus of American society trapped between an elite that is inimical and an underclass that is out of control yet receives the benefits of their own labor and discipline through welfare. Their responses on questionnaires show that they have most of the psychic and behavioral characteristics of what Pareto would call "lions," with strong positive attitudes toward national, community, ethnic, religious, and national solidarity and a willingness to use force to solve social and political problems. Yet, unlike

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bourgeois conservatives, Middle American Radicals do not reject large organizations in the state, economy or culture. They are in fact dependent on these organizations through their jobs for corporations, their membership in unions, their aspiration to send their children to colleges and universities, and their partial dependence on labor legislation and social services provided by the managerial state. Their opposition and alienation are not based on their dislike of large organizations but on what they perceive as the failed and flawed leadership of such organizations that does not represent them and their interests. Middle American Radicals are in fact what might be called a post-bourgeois proletariat, retaining many of the moral, social, and psychic dispositions and values of the bourgeois order but dislocated from the bourgeois order and materially dependent on the managerial system.

For at least the last 40 years, this post-bourgeois proletariat has provided the mass following of the American political right. They were the supporters of McCarthy in the 1950s and of Wallace in the 1960s, moving to Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan in the 1970s and '80s, and now apparently are in the process of moving back to their historic home in the Democratic Party. Bourgeois conservatism, however, with its mission of small government and low budgets, does not really represent their views or appeal to their interests, and it is unlikely that a political right cast in bourgeois dress will attract them in the future.

If there is going to be any serious resistance to the soft managerial system in the future at all and if that resistance is going to seek to correct the manipulation, dispersion, and social destruction the soft managerial regime has inflicted and to do so through reliance on the group solidarity and use of force that only lions can mobilize, then the central demographic component of such a resistance must be this post-bourgeois proletariat or Middle American Radical group, what Professor Warren has called the "Radical Center." Moreover, their resistance must be not merely political in the narrow formal sense of seeking election to office but also cultural, directed toward displacing or at least balancing the present soft managerial elite with a substantial contingent of lions. How that might be done should be the main preoccupation of any serious movement of the American right for the foreseeable future.■

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Each year, David and Glenna Bovenizer host the presentation of a paper by a prominent paleoconservative at their home—Willie Pie's Store—in Crozier, Virginia. The 1992 meeting was a much-deserved day in honor of Sam Francis.

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